SOUTH CAROLINA EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION
TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE SYSTEM

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The South Carolina Early Care and Education System is an outgrowth of an 18-month study that identified a comprehensive approach to link all necessary system components to enhance the state's capacity to effectively support and monitor Early Care and Education programs. A component of the study emphasized the need to provide technical assistance to educators of young children in order to offer higher quality care.

Subsequently a workgroup of collaborative partners was organized in spring 2004 to develop a statewide coordinated process to facilitate the provision of technical assistance in early care and education programs. Sincere thanks must be given to representatives of the organizations listed below for their time and thoughtful feedback to create this document. They constitute the partners of the South Carolina Technical Assistance Network.

> Educators of Young Children
> South Carolina Department of Social Services – Child Care Services
> South Carolina Center for Child Care Career Development
> South Carolina Department of Education - Office of Early Childhood Education
> South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness
> Clemson University – Institute on Family and Neighborhood Life
> South Carolina Head Start Collaboration Office
> South Carolina Resource and Referral Network
> Success By 6®
> Trident Technical College
> University of South Carolina

The Child Care Coordinating Council will be provided with regular updates regarding implementation of the technical assistance system and will serve as the forum for partners to provide feedback and make recommendations regarding modifications. The Center for Child Care Career Development will administer the application process for technical assistance certification.

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          Technical Assistance Regional Network

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OVERVIEW

South Carolina is committed to high quality early care and education experiences as a key aspect of an early learning system. The State has long recognized the importance of ongoing professional development for educators of young children. SCDSS currently requires licensed child care providers to complete 15 hours of training annually. Public schools provide professional development for their 4K teachers, as do the federally funded Head Start program. Increased interest in school readiness initiatives has led to an increase of interest in and calls for guidance and support to improve the quality of instruction and learning environments for young children.

Stimulating learning environments for young children require well-trained and experienced staff. All staff, regardless of expertise, can benefit from guidance and support that enhances their ability to work with young children. Technical assistance/mentoring initiatives are viewed as effective practices to provide direct on-site guidance and support to educators of young children. Technical assistance facilitates the integration of good teaching practices and materials into early care and education settings and emphasizes research-based practices.[1] Recent brain research clearly provides evidence of the need for high quality early education experiences to stimulate a child's full potential. We must commit resources to enhance the professional development of educators of young children. We must ensure that appropriate expertise is present in South Carolina's early care and education technical assistance system to meet that commitment.

Technical assistance is offered by public and private organizations through a range of on-site assistance including targeted guidance, consultation, planning, modeling, and support. The system outlines a distinct **statewide** process designed to integrate technical assistance into daily practice in early care and education programs. To assure consistency of core knowledge statewide, credit courses have been designed to focus on growth and development of infants, toddlers, and preschool children. The course participants are provided guidance and instruction regarding key elements to create nurturing learning environments for young children. The course participants agree to work with the partners to establish and maintain regional technical assistance networks throughout the state. Additionally the partners will actively recruit individuals with a variety of early childhood experiences and knowledge to strengthen the regional networks. The partners will provide oversight, support, and training for technical assistance providers. This system seeks to assure high quality support for educators of young children and to offer a professional development track for our state's technical assistance providers.

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[1] Hanft, Barbara., State Technical Assistance Initiatives for IDEA Part B Programs. November 2001.

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**SOUTH CAROLINA EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION
TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE SYSTEM**

I.   <u>Purpose</u>
Create and implement a statewide uniform system to provide technical assistance (TA) to educators of young children.

    A. Key Goals
        1. Improve the quality of learning environments for young children;
        2. Will have increased the uniform core knowledge and competencies of persons working with young children;
        3. Provide a specific set of education, training, and development experiences to meet the needs of the state's early care and education technical assistance providers;
        4. Provide support for the overall administration and management of early care and education programs; and
        5. Ensure consistency, accountability, and coordination for the provision of TA to educators of young children.

    B. Definition of Technical Assistance
Technical Assistance is defined as a multi-level process designed to offer a range of on-site assistance which includes targeted guidance, modeling, and support that will strengthen the quality of care being provided to infants, toddlers, and preschool children. TA shall be based on the educator's self identified needs, a program or environment assessment, a Department of Social Services (DSS) licensing report, or an ABC Program Monitoring report. TA shall be provided in a manner and at a level that meets the needs of educators.

II.   <u>Components of System</u>
    A. Technical Assistance Regional Network
The Network will be an interagency cadre of persons certified by the South Carolina Center for Child Care Career Development (CCCCD) to offer on-site technical assistance to educators of young children. These persons shall be referred to as Technical Assistance Providers (TAP). TAP shall conduct technical assistance in accordance with their level of certification and any areas of specialization as determined by the CCCCD. TAP shall establish regional teams and select one member from each team to coordinate services at the regional level and serve as liaison with the partners.

B. Support for TA Network

The partners shall provide oversight, education, and ongoing support to TAP. Support shall include, but is not limited to, the following actions:

1. Recruit individuals experienced in providing TA to serve as TAP;
2. Work with TAP to establish regional teams as indicated in Attachment 1;
3. Develop curriculum of courses for TAP certification and ongoing professional development;
4. Conduct orientation workshops for all TAP;
5. Conduct regularly scheduled regional and/or statewide meetings with TAP;
6. Provide training and education regarding practices and trends important to the provision of effective and supportive TA;
7. Manage reporting system for TA provision; modify as needed to monitor impact; and
8. Provide state and regional reports as needed.

C. Technical Assistance Provider Registry

The CCCCD shall create and maintain a registry of Certified Technical Assistance Providers. CCCCD shall serve as the sole entity to provide oversight and management of the TAP Registry. CCCCD shall develop a system to maintain, update, and distribute the list of certified TAP to include levels of certification and any areas of specialization upon request.

III.   **Technical Assistance Provider's Qualifications and Responsibilities**

A. The TAP' ability to establish a respectful and supportive relationship with educators of young children is inherent to successful implementation of the System. Attributes of successful TAP include but are not limited to professional competence, knowledge of child development and early childhood education, professional experience, good communication skills, and supportive interpersonal skills.

B. TAP' must become certified by the CCCCD by meeting the following education and experience requirements:

For Provisional Technical Assistance Certification

Applicants with a Bachelor, Master, or Doctorate Degree in a field other than Early Childhood Education or Child Studies/Development will be considered on an individual basis for provisional certification. They must meet the following experience requirements:

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- Bachelor Degree and 1 year of experience working with infants, toddlers, or preschool children; **or**
- Master or Doctorate Degree and 6 months of experience working with infants, toddlers, or preschool children.

Applicants must have completed one of the courses listed below **prior to submitting an application.** Individuals must also complete an additional course (listed below) within 2 years of applying for certification to remove the provisional status and move to Level I certification. Documentation (transcript) of successful completion of the additional course must be submitted to the CCCCD in order for provisional status to be removed. If second course is not completed within two years, applicant's name will be removed from the certified TAP list.

Courses must be three semester hours or four quarter hours **Early Childhood Education** classes taken for academic credit at a two year/four year college or university accredited by the appropriate national or regional accrediting body. Recommended courses include:

- *Technical Assistance for Developmentally Appropriate Programming for Preschoolers (USC – EDUC R632J)*
- *Introduction to Early Childhood (State Technical College – ECD 101)*
- *Socialization and Group Care of Infants and Toddlers (USC EDEC810, USC EDUC R632H, PD, or State Technical College ECD 205*
- *Current Trends and Issues in Early Childhood Education (USC EDEC 811, or State Technical College ECD 200)*
- *Growth and Development I and II (State Technical College ECD 102, ECD 203)*
- *Materials/Activities for Young Children (State Technical College ECD 237)*
- *Health, Safety, and Nutrition (State Technical College ECD 135)*
- *Guidance and Classroom Management (State Technical College 105)*
- *Administration and Supervision of Early Childhood Programs (State Technical College ECD 109)*

For Level I Technical Assistance Certification
- Associate in Arts/Sciences Degree in Early Care and Education with 2 years experience working with infants, toddlers or preschool children; **or**

- Bachelor Degree in a field other than Early Childhood Education or Child Studies/Development with a minimum of two three semester hour early childhood education classes and 1 year of experience working with infants, toddlers, or preschool children; **or**

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- Master of Education or higher degree in a field other than Early Childhood Education or Child Studies/Development with a minimum of two three semester hour early childhood education classes with 6 months of experience working with infants, toddlers, or preschool children.

For Level II Technical Assistance Certification

- Bachelor Degree in Early Childhood Education or Child Studies/Development with 1 year of experience working with infants, toddlers, or preschool children; **or**

- Master or Doctorate in Early Childhood Education or Child Studies/Development with 6 months of experience working with infants, toddlers, or preschool children; **or**

- Bachelor, Master, or Doctorate Degree in another field with 12 semester hours documented Early Childhood Education coursework and experience as listed in Level 1.

C. Submit a completed Technical Assistance Provider application. This includes:
1. Documentation of degree (copy of diploma, degree, or transcript);
2. Professional resume or Curriculum Vita showing experience;
3. Two letters of recommendation from professionals in the early care and education field; and
4. Transcripts documenting coursework in Early Childhood Education/Child Development/Program Management
5. Documentation indicating specialized training in any of the following areas if applicable:
   - South Carolina Department of Education – Office of Early Childhood Education recommended learning approaches: Project Approach, Montessori, Creative Curriculum, High Scope
   - Environment Rating Scales
   - Program Administration Scale
   - Program for Infant/Toddler Caregivers (WestEd)
   - NAEYC Accredited Center Director

D. Technical Assistance Providers' Responsibilities

TAP shall perform the following tasks:
1. Work closely with ABC program monitors, licensing specialists, and/or environment rating scale state core assessors as appropriate to ensure that educators of young children receive the type and level of guidance needed to improve services;
2. Work closely with educators of young children to develop and implement a quality improvement plan. The improvement plan shall include key objectives, measurable results, and be time-limited;
3. Use information and materials designated with the logo **South Carolina Foundation for Early Education** to guide work with educators of young children;
4. Submit annual reports to CCCCD. Annual reports shall also be submitted to the TAP employer as required.
5. Attend an orientation workshop to review and discuss the following:
   - Technical Assistance System
   - Key roles and responsibilities of TAP, and
   - Regional Network Teams.
6. Participate in regional network meetings; and
7. At least annually, attend professional development training or conference that enhances knowledge and skills regarding the care and education of infants, toddlers, and/or preschool children.

IV. **Types of Technical Assistance**
TA shall be based on the educator's self identified needs, results of a program administration or environment assessment, DSS Licensing, or ABC Program Monitoring reports. These documents shall serve as the basis for work with educators (includes administrative staff). TAP shall work with educators to develop and implement a quality improvement plan outlining goals and measurable objectives to be accomplished within a specified period of time.

A. Type I Brief (maximum of 3 visits) on-site consultation to provide change-affecting information and materials regarding specific issues. A primary objective at this level is to establish rapport with the educator to facilitate a working relationship and increase the intensity of TA provided as needed.

B.   Type II   Moderate (1-12 months) on-site consultation. Consultation is based on the findings of an effective practice assessment and the subsequent development of a quality improvement plan with measurable results. Educators must participate in the development of the plan and agree to perform action steps as outlined to meet stated goals. At this level, TA shall enhance the quality of key target areas such as learning centers, space and furnishings, and curriculum development. Additionally, guidance shall be offered that will help to improve program monitoring scores, enable the educator to better meet licensing requirements, or improve program administration or environment assessment scores. Site visits are conducted at least twice a month for a minimum of two hours and shall include information sharing, modeling, and mentoring developmentally appropriate environment or management practices. Measurable progress should be evident toward the goals as outlined in the improvement plan.

C.   Type III   Long-term (6-24 months) intensive on-site consultation. Consultation is based on the findings of an effective practice assessment and the subsequent development of a quality improvement plan with measurable results. Educators must participate in the development of the plan and agree to perform action steps as outlined to meet stated goals. At this level, TA shall address the overall environment and/or management of a facility. Guidance and support should be provided that will improve program monitoring scores, enable the provider or educator to better meet licensing requirements, or improve assessment scores. Site visits are conducted on a weekly basis for a minimum of 4 hours and shall include information sharing, modeling, and mentoring developmentally appropriate and/or effective management practices. Additionally TAP shall facilitate educators' participation in coaching visits to model programs. Measurable progress should be evident toward the goal as outlined in the improvement plan.

V.   **Assessment**

The partners and TAP shall have a role in evaluating the TA System. The review shall focus on the TA System goals, and process and outcome factors as indicated below.

A.   Outcome Factors
1.   Improvements on ratings that measure the quality of care and/or education provided;
2.   Improvements in ABC program monitoring score;
3.   Improvements in licensing reports;
4.   Improved education and/or skills of educators;
5.   Improved education and/or skills of TAP;
6.   Reduced turnover of staff;
7.   Reduced ratios and group size.

B.   Process Factors
1.   TA regions with designated liaison
 a.   Number of scheduled meetings and/or conference calls among the partners with regional liaisons;
 b.   Number of scheduled meetings and/or conference calls among regional liaisons and TAP;
 c.   Number of educational and/or professional development opportunities provided to TAP by the partners.

2.   Quality and availability of TAP
 a.   Number of TAP, statewide and by county or region;
 b.   Number of TAP by level of certification;
 c.   Number of TAP by areas of specialization.

3.   TA Registry
 a.   Assessment of registry by the partners to determine:
  i.   Is it working as planned?
  ii.   Is it producing needed data for TA System operation and evaluation?
 b.   Assessment of registry by TAP.

4. TA Services
   a. Number of providers and educators requesting services, include the following:
      i. Name of county
      ii. ABC status
      iii. Years in business
      iv. Type of TA requested
      v. Age of children who would be affected by service.
   b. Number of educators receiving services including information indicated in 4a
   c. Timeliness of service provision (date requested and date initiated)
   d. Information or materials used to support work with educators
   e. Length of time TA was provided
   f. Number of training sessions conducted (include topics)
   g. Extent that TA services met the needs of educators.

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**South Carolina Early Care and Education
Technical Assistance Regional Network**

Region I	*Region II*	*Region III*	*Region IV*	*Region V*	*Region VI*	*Region VII*
Allendale	Cherokee	Abbeville	Anderson	Calhoun	Darlington	Berkeley
Bamberg	Chester	Aiken	Greenville	Clarendon	Dillon	Charleston
Barnwell	Chesterfield	Edgefield	Laurens	Lexington	Florence	Dorchester
Beaufort	Fairfield	Greenwood	Oconee	Orangeburg	Kershaw	Georgetown
Colleton	Lancaster	McCormick	Pickens	Richland	Lee	Horry
Hampton	Union	Newberry	Spartanburg	Sumter	Marion	
Jasper	York	Saluda			Marlboro	
					Williamsburg	

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